



AN ADDRESS,
DELIVERED BY
HIS LORDSHIP
THE LORD REDESDALE
AT THE
PROTESTANT CHURCH, LONDON,
ON THE 14TH OF JULY, 1851.

LORD REDESDALE'S
ADDRESS

TO THE

PROTESTANTS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.

AN ADDRESS

TO THE

PROTESTANTS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM
OF EVERY DENOMINATION;

AND TO

THOSE ROMAN CATHOLICS

WHOSE RELIGIOUS OPINIONS DO NOT WHOLLY OVERCOME
A JUST REGARD

FOR THE FREE CONSTITUTION OF THE
BRITISH GOVERNMENT,

FOR THE INDEPENDENCE OF THEIR COUNTRY,

AND

FOR THAT HARMONY WHICH THEY OUGHT TO WISH SHOULD PREVAIL
BETWEEN THEM AND THEIR FELLOW-SUBJECTS
OF EVERY RELIGIOUS PERSUASION

UNDER ONE GOVERNMENT.

BY LORD REDESDALE.

LONDON:

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AN ADDRESS

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ON THE 15TH OF MARCH 1844

AT THE ROYAL INSTITUTION

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LONDON:

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ADDRESS,

&c.

It is now openly proposed to authorize, by law, the exercise by the Church of Rome, within the united kingdom, of the supreme power claimed by that church over all other authority, in derogation of the supreme power now legally vested in the constitutional authorities of the state, and in those authorities only : and thus to render the powers of the constitutional government subordinate to the powers of the Church of Rome in every thing which that church asserts to be, every where, by divine ordinance, subject to its supreme universal power ; representing resistance to that power as *rebellion* against the divine will, and stigmatizing, as *rebels*, the sovereign on the throne, and all his subjects who do not yield implicit obedience to its authority ; thus holding up, as objects of contempt, and of hatred, that sovereign, and all who are now placed in authority under him, as guilty of a *pestilent heresy*, which

divine vengeance is about to sweep from the face of the earth, according to a recent declaration, intimating the nature of the *persecution* intended to follow the establishment of the power of the Church of Rome.

Is not the proposal to authorize, by law, the exercise of the mighty and supereminent power thus claimed, (*a power threatening destruction to all who oppose its authority,*) in effect proposing a revolution in the government of the country; and an *immediate revolution*, so far as the operation of the measures suggested are proposed to be *immediate in operation*; a revolution destructive of that independence of foreign control which the existing laws of the country provide; a revolution leading to *further revolution*, which may gradually destroy *all* the provisions by which the form of the British government, *as a Protestant government*, has been long preserved?

What, too, can be inferred from the prophecy of the approaching destruction of the *pestilent heresy*, dissent from the Church of Rome, but persecution of such dissenters, with all the violence which the vengeance of the Roman Church has excited against dissenters from that church, at different times, in various parts of Europe, and which is now raging in Spain, with the assistance of the holy inquisition.

The revolution *immediately* proposed will introduce, in *all* the several constituted authorities of

the country, A POLITICAL PARTY ; subjects, and acknowledged subjects, of the Church of Rome ; seeking, by the influence of that church, to render their party the ruling power in the state, and to sweep the *pestilent heresy* of Protestantism from the face of the earth.

The religious opinions of that party are avowedly hostile to all the laws made for securing to the Protestants of the United Kingdom the freedom of religious opinion which they now enjoy ; particularly the security provided for them, by the laws regulating the succession to the throne, by the oath required from their king on his coronation, and by various other laws made for the same purpose ; all tending to preserve the *government* of the kingdom as a *Protestant government*. Amongst these laws are the solemn stipulations in those great national contracts by which the independent kingdoms of England and Scotland were united, and made to form the kingdom of Great Britain, and by which the kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland have also been united, and now form one kingdom. Some of those solemn stipulations, and particularly stipulations anxiously urged by the independent parliament of Scotland, in the treaty for the union of Scotland and England, and made fundamental articles in the solemn acts of the parliaments of both countries, ratifying that contract, and specially ratifying the precedent separate law of Scotland, which anxiously excluded persons

professing the Roman Catholic religion from parliament, and from voting in the constitution of parliament, it is now proposed, (in breach of the good faith hitherto observed with respect to that contract) directly and absolutely to repeal. In other words, it is proposed, openly to violate that solemn contract.

What reliance then can the people of Scotland have on any of the stipulations on their behalf in that contract of union? What reliance can they have on those provisions, (not immediately proposed to be repealed,) by which, together with the provisions proposed to be repealed, their forefathers anxiously sought to protect their established church, *the Protestant Church of Scotland*. If part may fall, all may fall, before the power of the Catholic Association in Ireland; the terror of whose power has been avowed as influencing the ministers of the crown in the measures now proposed to parliament. What reliance can the Protestants of Ireland, or the Protestants of Great Britain, have on any parts of the contract of union between Great Britain and Ireland, or on any of the laws of the three countries before their union, tending to protect the Protestant religion against the claims of Roman Catholic power, and either positively, or by clear inference, ratified by those contracts of union; the laws especially by which the whole of the United Kingdom was made emphatically Protestant. All, all, are inconsistent

with the supreme power of the Roman Church, now sought to be established by law ; and all, all, may fall before the alarming force of a Catholic Association, assisted by the influence of a Catholic party in every department of the state, legislative and executive ; a party armed with legitimate power, backed by an illegitimate power, which the measures proposed will tend to render far more formidable than that illegitimate power, the Catholic Association in Ireland, by which the ministers of the country have been so overawed.

If what has been called by the gentle word, *agitation*, can, without the assistance of political power, produce so much submission to Roman claims, what may not be hereafter extorted by agitation, supported by a large portion of political power pervading every department in the state ?

Thus, every provision made by the existing laws for the protection of the Protestant religion, may fall, one by one ; following the fate of the provisions now sought to be immediately repealed ; and the kingdom may rapidly become a Popish instead of a Protestant kingdom.

The rage manifested on the assertion that such *might* be the effect of the measures proposed, betrayed *a consciousness* that such *might eventually* be the effect of those measures.

Effusions of anger often betray the truth.

The measures proposed are *manifestly hostile to the national independence*, so far as they place it,

in any degree, under the yoke of a foreign power ; so far as they permit, and still more, so far as they authorize, any interference of a foreign power with the allegiance which the subjects of every country ought to owe to the government of that country ; to the powers delegated to that government, solely and exclusively, by the laws of the country ; *an allegiance which, unless sole and undivided, cannot be perfect and sincere.*

Where the government of a country is vested in an absolute monarch, the exercise of authority, within his dominions, by a foreign authority, derogates from his absolute power ; and, therefore, the exercise of such authority, independent of his control, is dangerous to his power, and to the peace of the country under his government ; and the experience of ages has proved that the interference of the Papal supremacy, even under such monarchical governments, has frequently produced great inconvenience.

But the exercise of such foreign power is far more dangerous in a country where the exercise of every lawful power is limited and controlled by law ; and where the exercise of such power is delegated to various ministers of power, legislative and executive ; and where the most important branch of the legislative power is, in a considerable degree, *created by popular election* ; that branch of the legislative having become, by its influence, in a great degree, the executive as well

as the legislative power, dictating to the executive power who shall be its ministers.

For it cannot be pretended that the prince on the throne has the *free* choice of his ministers. The prince on the throne has been compelled to obey, in the appointment of his ministers, the dictation of a party, even against the voice of his people, which accorded with his own inclination.

In a country where power is so distributed, there can be no good government, unless the law of the country is the supreme governor; the *law of the country* ought to be *alone supreme*. In such a country, if the supremacy of the law may be infringed by the intervention of a foreign power, the people of the country cannot enjoy that perfect freedom which their domestic institutions, uncontrolled by foreign power, would have provided for them. As the supremacy of the law creates their freedom, if any important power can be exercised, within the country, independent of the control of the law, and of the powers authorized by the law to provide for its due execution, that power directly tends to the destruction of the constitutional freedom of the people. That power, being *above the law*, must be, in exercise, a *lawless power*; a power above control; and therefore dangerous to, and tending to the destruction of the lawful powers, created by the established constitution of the government, according to which the law of the country is the only supreme power.

Such constitutionally is, and ought to be, the government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland—*a government according to law, and only according to law*; and such it will be, as long as its established political institutions shall be duly observed.

The pretensions of the Church of Rome are, therefore, in direct hostility to the established constitution of the British government.

That church arrogates to itself powers *above all human laws*. It claims those powers by divine, not by human, authority. *Its spirit is therefore despotic*—the despotism of religious opinion; and the spirit of despotism will ever direct the exercise of its authority.

The pretensions of the Church of Rome are, therefore, inconsistent with the institutions of *any* government *created by man*; they are inconsistent with the institutions of a government in form an absolute monarchy; but most inconsistent with the institutions of a limited government: a government so constituted, as, by legal restrictions on the exercise of power, to produce the just freedom of its subjects from the oppression of arbitrary power; such as the British government ought to be.

The pretensions of the Church of Rome are in direct opposition to the spirit of the institutions of such a government. That spirit forbids the exercise of tyrannical power, and provides laws to pre-

vent the exercise of such power. The Church of Rome claims, by divine right, absolute and uncontrolled power, (that is, tyrannical power,) in whatever that church claims to be within its dominion. That church, therefore, and those who assert its rights, and devotedly seek to enforce those rights, must be adverse to the *entire freedom* which the British constitutions were intended to insure to all the people under their rule.

The adherents to the Church of Rome in the United Kingdom, may pretend to advocate the principles of the free government established in their country; but they advocate, at the same time, submission to the Church of Rome, and the absolute subjection of the powers of every government, and of the subjects of every government, to the supreme power of that church; a power inconsistent with that freedom which the *Protestant subjects* of this kingdom now enjoy. At the same time, the ministers of the Church of Rome, *disdaining the language of peace*, hold up to their votaries the religion of their sovereign, (that religion solemnly connected with his title to the throne,) as an object of horror and contempt; as tending to bring on him, and on all who profess it, and on all who dissent in any manner from the Church of Rome, divine vengeance; continually representing that religion, *in words never to be forgotten, as a pestilent heresy*, which that divine vengeance will shortly sweep from the face of the

earth: language which must have the effect of producing, on the minds of the votaries of the Church of Rome, the most vehement hatred to, and abhorrence of, those by whom the government of the country is now administered, and may be administered, if not professing the Roman Catholic religion. In effect, the ministers of the Church of Rome assert, that, by divine decree, the Roman Catholic religion ought to be, and shortly will be, the only religion of the United Kingdom: a prophecy tending to effect its own accomplishment *by force*.

The Church of Rome, *ever since it claimed to be an universal church*, has been at war with *every government* in which the people professed the Christian religion; and especially with every government in which the people had any share in its administration.

It has been said, that if those British subjects who profess the Roman Catholic religion are slaves of the Church of Rome, they are voluntary slaves, and their slavery only concerns themselves.

Their slavery concerns all; and especially as it renders them anxious to reduce all to the same slavery.

If a portion of the subjects of the United Kingdom were to avow an opinion, that the prince on the throne had divine right to absolute power, and that all control on that power by human laws was contrary to the divine will; if they were to seek to

propagate their opinion, and to engage others to embrace their opinion, and if they were to act on that opinion in support of the divine right which they thus attributed to their prince; would they not be deemed hostile to the free constitution of the British government? If they were to form themselves into a party, protected by the Prince, and seeking to establish the absolute power which they conscientiously attributed to him, would not their association be deemed an unlawful conspiracy against the freedom of the British constitution, and punishable as such? Was not such the conspiracy of the partisans of James the Second? and were not they justly driven from the country, as he was driven from the throne? Was not their conspiracy *treason against the established constitution of the state?*

In what does an *association* of Roman Catholics, seeking to establish the authority of the Church of Rome in the United Kingdom, differ from such an association, except as a distinction is attempted between what the Romanists call *spiritual*, and what they call *temporal* power. Is not the power claimed by the Church of Rome, in effect, a power affecting the government of the country; and therefore, if it *may* be called a spiritual power, is it not *a temporal power also?* Is not every power, affecting any rights of individuals, a temporal power; controlling the rights of those individuals, and especially the rights of con-

science—rights over which the Church of Rome pretends to despotic sway—whilst its adherents alledge *their* rights of conscience, in support of their attempts to give to the Roman church such despotic sway over the consciences of others?

Influence on the conscience of man is sovereign power over the mind of man; and the man who is under such influence is governed by a despotic power, to which all other power must submit.

Such is the condition of a person who conscientiously submits to the tyranny of the Church of Rome, claiming universal dominion over all persons professing the Christian religion, and denouncing, as enemies to the Christian religion, and contemnners of its authority, all who refuse unlimited obedience to the Church of Rome, in every thing which that church thinks fit to deem the subject of its authority, as the Catholic or Universal Church of Christ; denouncing, as rebels against its divine authority, all who, professing themselves to be Christians, refuse obedience to its government and its decrees. If this be not despotism, what is despotism? If this be not tyranny, what is tyranny? What tyrant, whoever cursed the world, claimed higher power? And is not this tyranny, when exerted, an exertion, in effect, of temporal power; having effect by means of temporal power, especially through the medium of its holy inquisition, now reigning triumphant in Spain, to suppress all religious freedom in that country?

Such are the pretensions of the Church of Rome to supreme power; and it is now proposed to countenance those pretensions, and to give (indirectly at least) authority to the exercise, within the United Kingdom, of the powers which it claims, founded on those pretensions; and to assist the exercise of those powers, by giving all political power in the state, except that of the prince on the throne, to the devoted adherents to this tyranny.

The first concession would be, in itself alone, a concession (not in positive words indeed, but in effect) of the legal exercise of the powers claimed by the Church of Rome, though the legal exercise of those powers is utterly inconsistent with the freedom of the British constitution, and the independence of its government.

But it is proposed to do more: it is proposed to allow to those who submit to this power, (who avow its influence on their conduct, and who advocate its right to compel implicit obedience in all things which it assumes to be within its dominion,) a right to act in the government of the British empire in all its parts; legislative and executive; and consequently a right to effect the submission of that government to the same despotic influence to which they submit themselves, and to enforce on those who deny the divine authority of the Church of Rome, submission and obedience to that authority.

The slaves of the Church of Rome will thus become the rulers of the once free subjects of the British constitution; and authorized to make for them such laws as may compel their obedience to the tyrannical power of that church, and so far destroy their freedom.

Slaves, of every description, cannot be the fit rulers of freemen. The instruments of tyranny are every where themselves slaves to the tyranny which they support, and their slavery renders the power of their master despotic. It is the slavery of the instruments of power which renders the master of those slaves, in any country, the despotic ruler of that country; it is the freedom of the servants of the British government which renders that government a free government; destroy the freedom of those servants, and the character of the government must become despotic. Despotism and slavery are results, each of the other; and where either is, the other will be also.

Government, in one sense despotic, is essential to the freedom of the people generally; but that despotic government must be the government of the constitutional law, framed on principles consistent with general freedom, and administered by those who acknowledge those principles, and in all things submit to the dominion of that constitutional law which they administer, and on which their authority rests. A government free from the restriction of law, is the only, absolute, tyrannical,

government; and a government free from the restriction of law, must ever be, in spirit, tyrannical.

In a free government, the constitutional law is despotic; but that law admits of no despotism but its own: and it requires its own despotism to be administered in subjection to the law by which it has been created; that law regulating, in all things, the persons by whom, and the conduct of all persons by whom, the despotism is administered. To the constitutional law all must yield obedience—the governors, as well as the people governed—and the authority of the governors is lawful, only so long as they abide by, and duly observe, the constitutional law. James the Second broke through the constitutional law. He was hurled from his throne, and driven from the country, with those who had rendered themselves the willing slaves of his unconstitutional assumption of power. Let his fate be a warning to others, and especially a warning to those who now seek to place the free government of their country under the despotic dominion of the Church of Rome; a dominion which excites many a sigh in those countries where it is triumphant; and, it may be hoped, in some, who in this country still submit to it; influenced by education, habit, or connexion.

The despotism of the Church of Rome, is a despotism of which the authority was never acknowledged by the British constitution; and it is fundamentally adverse to the freedom of that con-

stitution, with which its authority is incompatible. It asserts a power, as existing in the Church of Rome, which the British constitution denies, and ever has denied ; and that power is administered by authorities constituted by itself, *in opposition to the law of the British constitution, which admits of no authority not constituted by itself.* To give countenance by law to the exercise of any such authority within the territory governed by the British constitution, over any persons whose allegiance is due to the dominion of the British constitution, would be to countenance the exercise of powers inconsistent with the principles of the British constitution, and tending to destroy the influence of those principles in the administration of the British government. It would be, in effect, *treason against the British constitution*, as now established by law.

No man can serve two masters ; and therefore the slave of the power assumed by the Church of Rome cannot be the faithful servant of the British constitution ; which is, in principle, adverse to the assumed powers of the Church of Rome—*powers incompatible with the freedom of the British constitution.*

Why is an alien excluded from the exercise of political power in the British constitution ? Because an alien is considered as the subject of a foreign power, whose interests *may* be adverse to the interests of the kingdom.

The subject of the church of Rome is, as far as

his devotion to the church of Rome extends, *an alien to the Protestant constitution of the United Kingdom*. He is taught, conscientiously, to *abhor that constitution, so far as it is Protestant*; and as religious opinions operate more forcibly on the mind of man than any other opinions, the Roman Catholic is, so far as he is alien to the Protestant constitution of this country, a more dangerous alien than those aliens, whose interests in their own country may or may not be inconsistent with the welfare of the British empire.

One of the most important duties of a person intrusted with power in the administration of the British government, as now established, is the protection of the established religion of the country, and of all Protestant religion of every denomination, in opposition to the religion of the church of Rome. Such, as the law now stands, is the clear, and unquestionable duty of every person entrusted with power in the administration of the British government.

How can a sincere disciple of the Church of Rome, a slave of the Roman priesthood, faithfully execute this duty, consistently with his notions of his religious duty?

He believes it to be his religious duty to destroy Protestantism, as a pestilent heresy, an unchristian rebellion against the Church of God; conceiving the Church of Rome to be solely and only the Church of God, and every Protestant church a

church of the devil; the common appellation given by Roman Catholic priests to every Protestant church.

Can such a man be the faithful servant of a Protestant government in whatever concerns the Protestant character of that government? *Will his priest permit him to be a faithful servant of a Protestant government in any matter concerning religion, whatever may be his inclination to do his duty conscientiously, according to the free spirit of the institutions of that Protestant government?*

Let every Roman Catholic coolly and deliberately weigh this in his own mind. Let him consult his conscience, if allowed to use it freely, and consider whether he *ought* to seek for power which he may be *compelled to use in breach of the confidence by which he obtained that power*, if voluntarily conceded to him. If, indeed, the concession is to be considered as a concession obtained by that terror of Roman Catholic force, with which His Majesty's ministers have endeavoured to impress the public mind; if the concession is to be deemed a submission to fear excited by the power of that Association which has so long been permitted in Ireland to insult the law of the country, and to which the English Roman Catholics have recently thought fit to make themselves parties; then the Roman Catholic may justly say, "I have a right to use my victory, the victory of my party, procuring the triumph of my religion; I have a right to use all the

power I can obtain, to accomplish the destruction of the Protestant, and re-establishment of the Roman Catholic religion, sole and uncontrolled."

Will his Majesty's ministers dare to avow, that the concessions which they have proposed, are the triumph of the victorious Roman Catholic religion over the vanquished Protestant religion, the fruits of Roman Catholic victory?

The man whose mind is thoroughly subdued to submission to the most extravagant claims of the Roman church, will certainly so think, and so act, if by any means he shall possess the power proposed to be conceded.

It may be hoped that there are men, professing the Roman Catholic religion, though few in number, whose minds may not be so thoroughly subdued, so regardless of every just feeling, in such absolute slavery to the Roman priesthood. To them this appeal may be made. Will they concur in reducing the free constitution of the British government, and all the subjects of that government, those who do, as well as those who do not, profess the Roman Catholic religion, to absolute subjection to the Church of Rome?

Whatever art may be used to disguise the true effect of the measures now offered to the consideration of the two houses of parliament, their effect must be, to authorize by law the assumption and exercise of power; and of power under the rule of a foreign power, in derogation of the supreme

powers, legislative and executive, now established for the government of the United Kingdom; the power thus authorized, tending, in its exercise, to destroy, gradually, if not rapidly, the religious freedom of the people of that kingdom from all foreign power: a freedom *asserted* long before the reformation of the established church; but completely effected by that reformation, and by its consequences; and finally vindicated by the revolution of 1688, and by the acts of a large portion of the people of England, Scotland, and Ireland, asserting their freedom from such foreign power, against the attempts of James the Second and his adherents, to bring the country again under the dominion of the Church of Rome.

Is such the *intent* of those who advise the measures now proposed? Certainly it is not. But if such be the tendency of those measures, it is of little importance what is the *intent* of those who propose them.

Their *professed object* is to create *universal peace* throughout the United Kingdom; and especially to restore peace to Ireland, where, by the long misconduct of the government of the country, from the first English invasion to the present time, true peace, the peace of the law, has seldom prevailed.

During nearly four centuries after that invasion, religious contention did not create disturbance in Ireland. Imperfect government, produced by various causes, was the misery which Ireland then

endured. When the people of England threw off the yoke of the Church of Rome, a new cause of dissension arose in Ireland. The rude state in which the greater part of the population of Ireland then were, the superstitious character of their religion, far more superstitious than the character of religion in England at any time, prevented the progress in Ireland of that reform which had been effected in a great degree in England, where the minds of the people had long been prepared for reform, and where the tyranny of the Church of Rome had long been a subject of popular discontent.

But the progress of the reformation in Ireland was prevented by other causes. The internal wars which had desolated Ireland from the first invasion of Henry the Second; the character of the adventurers from England, whose object had generally been plunder; the effect of that character upon the government of Ireland, (an effect which continued for centuries, and which even the union of Ireland with Great Britain under one government has not wholly destroyed); had brought Ireland, when the Protestant religion was first established there, into a state of misery and desolation. The country had been wasted by internal war in almost every part; and the waste of war had extended so far that the ministers of the reformed church found the church establishment, in the greater part of the country, in a state of deplorable wretchedness. The churches were generally in ruin, several utterly destroyed,

and the residence of a minister almost every where wanting. The civil government was in a state of weakness and distraction; and little effort was made to remedy these evils. During a long period, in the reigns of Elizabeth and James the First, the establishment of a Protestant church was, in many parts of the island, nominal, not real.

The civil war which desolated Ireland in the reign of Charles the First, increased the evils under which Ireland had suffered; and the improvements meditated, and in a degree effected, by the strong mind of the Lord Deputy Wentworth, afterwards Earl of Strafford, were neglected. Whatever faults may be attributed to that extraordinary man, it would be injustice to his memory not to allow, that, though his government in Ireland may have been too often above the law, it had the effect of producing, in a degree, obedience to the law; an obedience then most essential to the improvement of Ireland, and particularly important to those who professed the Roman Catholic religion, and who were often ill-treated by the tyranny of Protestant ascendancy. One of the articles of the impeachment preferred against Strafford was, that he had been *too favourable to the Roman Catholics*. He had to deal with a divided people, in a country where every man had long sought to be above the law. He attempted (sometimes with too strong a hand) to give to Roman Catholics the protection of the law, as he attempted to make all obedient to the law.

When the parliament of England obtained dominion in Ireland, and their army subdued all who opposed them in arms, the religious prejudices of that army, and of the government by which it was directed, tended to the further oppression of the people of Ireland, of whom a large part remained attached to the Roman Catholic religion, and were particularly disgusted with the fanaticism of their oppressors.

The restoration of Charles the Second was attended with measures in Ireland which were in many instances very oppressive; and particularly oppressive as they were under the conduct of men whose object was plunder. Many Roman Catholic families were deprived of their property, of which a considerable part was transferred to new adventurers; a description of persons always eager for prey in Ireland. The revolution of 1688 had consequences in Ireland which partook, in a degree, of the same character.

From all these events have arisen circumstances which peculiarly mark the condition of Ireland; and which deserve peculiar attention from those whose duty it is to administer the government of that country.

Religious dissension is not the only grievance. The misgovernment of centuries, and the consequences of that misgovernment, have produced various causes of dissension, often co-operating with religious dissension; and all these causes have

continually mixed with the effects of religious dissension, to prevent internal quiet in the country.

When, therefore, it is proposed seriously to affect the civil constitution of the government of that country, by intrusting the administration of that government to persons hostile to an important part of its institutions, its established Protestant church; to persons long excluded from such power, and unquestionably desirous of using that power for the destruction of the church thus proposed to be committed to their care; many of them conceiving that they have also, individually, serious grounds for complaint; it ought not to be matter of surprise, that those who are anxious to preserve the Protestant church, that those who are anxious to preserve the titles of the present holders of land, that those who are anxious to preserve the general liberty, and the property which they now enjoy, should feel great alarm. If a serious disturbance should happen in that country, religious dissension may have produced the flame, but many other causes will have contributed to give it force, and to render its extinction difficult. No man can foresee to what extent révolution may be carried, if the Roman Catholic religion should reign triumphant in Ireland.

The existence of some national religious establishment has been found necessary in every country:—for the necessity may be justly inferred from the universal adoption of an established religion in

every civilized country of which we have any knowledge; and even in countries which can scarcely be deemed properly to fall under the denomination of civilized countries. In the rudest tribes have been found some traces of national religion. In cultivated countries, the religious establishments have generally been important objects of political concern, and guarded with jealous care.

In political discussions it has generally been considered, that the purposes for which governments have been constituted are,

I. To regulate the conduct of man towards man within the territory under the rule of each government.

II. To regulate the conduct of men assembled under one government towards men assembled under every other government, and towards men not associated under any form of government, if any such there are.

A government, so far as it is constituted to regulate the conduct of men within the territory under the rule of that government, must be founded and maintained on certain principles; and with those principles all its institutions must generally agree. Otherwise there will be no stability in the form or administration of such government. Both or either may change from day to day, according to the will of those who may from day to day obtain superior power, unless fixed principles, operating on the minds of a great majority of those

who possess power, either political or physical, are assumed as principles regulating the character of the institutions of the government, and give steadiness to those institutions.

The mind of man influences all his actions. He lives and moves under that influence. In the gratification of all his passions, his mind still influences his actions; though his passions may influence his mind to allow of their gratification, and though, when uninfluenced by those passions, his mind might urge him to a different course.

The mind of man is also under external influence; particularly the influence of the minds of other men, and frequently of men whose minds are also under the influence of others. Dominion over the minds of others is sometimes obtained by superior powers of mind; but often by exertion of even inferior powers, which the indolence of those on whom they act permits to gain an ascendancy, which would not be gained if the powers of both were equally exerted. The mind of man is also almost universally influenced by habits, which become the source of deeply-rooted opinions.

The actions of men being thus influenced by their minds, and their minds being thus acted upon by various influences, the actions of men are often not the result of the just operation of their own minds, applied to the subject immediately in their view, but the result of various operations on their minds, excluding or overruling just reflection.

Various, therefore, are the means by which the minds of men are influenced in action, and particularly in obtaining and exercising political power; that power which directs the actions of every government in its conduct towards its own subjects, and towards others.

In seeking for, and in exercising, political power, men may be influenced by ambition, by avarice, by vanity, and all the worst, as well as the best, passions of men; but there is one great and powerful operator which bears the name of

RELIGION.

“The fool hath said in his heart, ‘There is no God.’”

But did that fool believe his own assertion?

He may have tried to persuade himself that such was his belief; but all that we know of man, from history or observation, tends to prove that man *cannot* believe that there is no God.

If there exists, or ever did exist, any person whose mind is or was so framed, or so acted upon, as conscientiously to entertain that belief, ought the institutions of men, for the government of the mass collected in one society, to be formed with a view to the possible existence of such a person. Ought they not, on the contrary, to be formed in conformity to the almost universal, if not universal, opinion of all men, in all ages; and must not, therefore, religion be an important subject of consideration, in framing the constitution of every go-

vernment, and in acting under a constitution so framed.

The history of the world in all ages informs us of the influence of religion on the minds of men in every country, and of the attention of every government to those institutions which concerned religion; adapting those institutions to the prevalent opinions of the people under the rule of that government on the subject of religion, and endeavouring to preserve uniformity of opinion, and to avoid discord arising from difference of opinion.

In consequence, the political constitutions of every country in the pagan world have had some establishment of ministers of religion, regulating and directing the public worship; and have generally preserved, with much care, the administration of those establishments. Such establishments were generally considered as part of the machinery of the state, assisting in the good government of the state.

In the peculiar system of the Jewish polity, constructed for the purpose of preserving the Jews as a distinct people, separated from all other people, the religious and political establishments were specially combined; and when the tribes, which formed the kingdom of Israel, separated from the kingdom of Judah, the policy of the sovereigns of the revolted tribes formed a new religious system, as essential to the independence of their distinct government. The express object of this separated religious

system was, to prevent the influence of religious opinion operating to bring back the separated tribes to obedience to the kings of Judah.

The kings of Israel, aware of the effect of religious opinion on political conduct, framed, for their own state, a distinct priesthood; anxiously separated from the worship at Jerusalem, as essential to preserve their own independence, and the distinct character of the kingdom of Israel.

When the doctrines of Christ were first preached in Judea, the Jewish priests took alarm at those doctrines as subversive of their power. Their persecution of the Christians was produced by apprehensions for their own authority; and they instigated the Roman government against the Christians, by representing the Christian doctrines as tending to establish a new political government, in derogation of the power of the Roman empire.

The apostles of Christ, conscious of the necessity of constituting an internal political government, to keep in due order, and in obedience to the temporal government of the country, (obedience which they strenuously urged as due to that government,) the persons employed in preaching the gospel, created an internal voluntary government of their disciples; forming that government on the plan of other political governments. But they created this establishment as a voluntary association, so far resembling the voluntary associations of Protestant dissenters in this country; and wherever the gospel

was preached, similar establishments were formed. Conflicting opinions very soon disturbed these establishments; and contentions for power, for fame, and for emolument, followed the confliktion of opinions. Such will ever be the effect of similar causes; effects demonstrating the importance to every government, of forming, by its own authority, a religious establishment, regulated and protected by the supreme power of the government; and the necessity for giving preponderance to that establishment, wherever difference in religious opinions leads to the creation of other religious sects.

The experience of the world, therefore, has taught, that, to preserve internal peace, every government ought to assume to itself control over the effect of conflicting religious opinions, so far as the confliktion of opinions may tend to disturb the internal peace of the state: and there is no proposition which experience has more clearly shown to be false, than the assertion, “That the government of a country ought not to concern itself with the opinions of its subjects, and especially with their religious opinions.”

To promote the general influence of religion on the minds of their subjects, for moral as well as for political purposes, is manifestly the interest of every government; and all governments have used that influence for the purposes of order in the general administration of their affairs. With this view they have generally been anxious to procure,

as far as possible, uniformity of religious opinion; and where that has been found impossible, they have endeavoured to obviate inconvenience from diversity of opinion, by protecting certain religious opinions, and certain modes of impressing those religious opinions on the minds of their subjects; feeling the importance of obtaining as much union of opinion as possible, and of preventing, as much as possible, conflict of opinions; and therefore bringing the influence of religious opinions, as much as possible, under the dominion of the state, by entrusting its administration to servants of the state.

With this view there were established by the legislative authorities in England, Scotland, and Ireland, whilst their respective legislative authorities were distinct, the three distinct Protestant churches of England, Scotland, and Ireland; those of England and Ireland, now united as one church, having adopted one form of church government, and the legislature of Scotland having adopted a different form; those churches not differing so much in doctrine as in discipline.

In all these established churches, the sovereign power of the state is acknowledged as the supreme head of the several establishments, which are thus placed under the control of that sovereign power, legislative and executive.

The existence in a state of any important power independent of the sovereign power of the state, is utterly inconsistent with good order in the state;

and an established religion, independent of the sovereign power to which the general government of the country is entrusted, is not to be found in the history of the world, till the Bishops of Rome, in the distractions which followed the decay of the Roman empire, arrogated to themselves supremacy, (first limited, at length universal,) pretending that the Church of Rome was, by divine appointment, the head and ruler of all Christian churches; and asserting that all other authorities, lay and ecclesiastical, ought to bow down in reverence, and implicitly obey, that sovereign ruler, as so ordained by God.

This claim of universal supremacy was unknown to the Christians in Britain whilst under the Roman government; and unknown in Ireland until after the invasion of the island by Henry the Second. The simple creed of the ancient Irish Christians admitted of no such claim of supreme power; and to the English invasion Ireland owes its first subjection to the power of the Church of Rome.

The extravagant extent to which the court of Rome frequently attempted to carry that power, was frequently resisted in England; and particularly by Henry the Second, and by his parliament. It was resisted by almost every succeeding sovereign, and his parliament; and laws were made, and are still in force, controlling the extravagant power claimed by the church of Rome; laws made long before Henry the Eighth revolted against all authority of the Church of Rome.

The tyranny of the Roman supremacy, resisted by the predecessors of Henry the Eighth, and by their parliaments, the advocates for what is called Catholic emancipation seek now to establish, in all the extravagance of its claims, and in all the plenitude of its power, both in Great Britain and Ireland, over all the King's subjects who profess the Roman Catholic religion; and thus to make the supreme power of the Church of Rome, in much greater extent than ever acknowledged in the reign of Henry the Second, or any of his successors, in effect the law of the land; authorizing the exercise of such powers without control, in Great Britain and Ireland, over all persons professing the Roman Catholic religion. It may be said that the submission of these persons to that power is voluntary: so the submission of the negro slaves in Jamaica to the superstitions of Africa was voluntary; but, for the sake of the voluntary victims of those superstitions, and for the peace of the other inhabitants of the island, it was found necessary to forbid such superstitious practices by law. So in England, the practice of the pretended art of witchcraft was forbidden by law.

The exercise of the Papal supremacy, as it affects any of his Majesty's subjects, is inconsistent with the freedom which they ought to enjoy under the free constitution of the British government: and those who submit to it, by their submission to a control inconsistent with the freedom of the

British constitution, render themselves, so far as they submit to that control, unfit guardians of the freedom of the British constitution ; unfit to be the guardians of the freedom of others, so far as they are themselves not free.

To render themselves fit guardians of that freedom which the British constitution offers to them, and to the rest of the people, they ought first to emancipate themselves from a control incompatible with the freedom of that constitution, and incompatible with the freedom of those who do not submit to that control, and who claim the benefit of that freedom which the British constitution gives. If they had a right to submit themselves to such control, they can have no right to infringe the freedom of others ; a freedom which their possession of political power, influenced in its exercise by their religious opinions, must constantly put in hazard. To preserve that freedom it is necessary that the minds of its guardians should be free.

Yet the extravagant power of the Church of Rome, a power utterly inconsistent with the freedom of the British constitution, it is now proposed to recognize by law, as a power fit to be exercised over subjects of the British government to whom the guardianship of the British constitution is also sought to be intrusted ; intrusted, not only by means of political power in the election of representatives of the country in parliament ; but intrusted as members of the legislature, intrusted

as the depositaries of every other political power in the state. Intrusted as the principal officers and ministers of the crown, in the execution of every political power conceded to the crown to be executed by others ; even as the officers and advisers of the crown in the political capacity of the crown, as head of the Protestant established churches, having, in a considerable degree, the patronage of those churches, and having an influence over every thing which concerns those churches. Can it be fit to give this power over the established churches to those who profess a deadly hatred to those churches ; and a wish to sweep them from the face of the earth, with those doctrines which they teach, and which the Church of Rome stigmatizes as *a pestilent heresy*.

No power over the Roman Catholic church is allowed to the Crown in return ; and no power, therefore, is allowed to the Protestant ministers and advisers of the Crown in whatever concerns the Roman Catholic churches. The Roman Catholics are to be allowed patronage and control in the Protestant church, but Protestants are not to be allowed *even a negative* on appointments in the Roman Catholic church : not even that small degree of power which might enable them to exclude any person of the most known disloyalty to the person of a Protestant king, or to the free government of the country.

To the Protestant church establishments of every

description, as well as to the Protestant religion generally, the hatred of the Roman Catholics has been openly declared. They stigmatize it as a *pestilent heresy* ; they openly avow their anxiety for its destruction ; and yet, persons openly making such avowal, are to become the *guardians and protectors of the established Protestant churches*, and are to direct the power and influence of the crown in every thing concerning those churches to which the power and influence of the crown can extend.

The Roman Catholics, therefore, are, by the proposed measures, to have an *equal* participation with Protestants of political power ; an equal participation of power in whatever concerns the Protestant churches : whilst Protestants are to be excluded from even a negative power in what concerns the Roman Catholic church ; that church being under the control of a foreign power, a control to which no resistance is to be allowed, and against the dangerous effect of which no remedy whatever is proposed.

The Protestant character of the throne is, *at present*, proposed to be preserved ; but how long can it be preserved, when the power of the Roman Catholic church shall be thus rendered independent of all restraint, and when every important minister, every confidential adviser, of the crown, may be Roman Catholics.

Why has the patronage in the Protestant churches, which belongs to the crown, been given to

the crown? To enable the crown to control those churches, if they pretended to any authority injurious to the state: and yet that patronage may, by the proposed measure, be in the hands of Roman Catholics; and there is at the same time to exist, in Ireland, a Roman Catholic ecclesiastical establishment, superior in number to the Protestant establishment; and in England and Scotland Roman Catholic ecclesiastical establishments of considerable force, establishments of late years greatly increased, establishments which may be increased to any amount;—and over these great establishments there is to be no control, but the control of the court of Rome.

It is true that the crown has no direct control over the Protestant establishments dissenting from the established churches. But the different character of those Protestant establishments has been already noticed; and the consequences of that difference in character renders their power, even if combined, of comparatively small force in contention with the established churches; and the different characters of those establishments prohibit combination of their powers.

A character directly the reverse marks the Catholic church, and gives to it powers which must be formidable to the established churches, and to the dissenting Protestant congregations of every description.

Those dissenting congregations profess no alle-

giance to any foreign power. Dissenting from each other, they profess no combination amongst themselves; and they must, for their own safety, rather look to the protection of the established churches, against the Roman Catholic church, than seek, by alliance with the Roman Catholic church, to destroy the established churches. Those established churches are the best protection to all Protestant dissenters against that power which the Roman Catholic church would exert for the destruction of all who dissent from it, if it should be able to give to its power universal predominance. That the Roman church, if it shall have the means, or the probable means, will seek to obtain that predominance, no one can doubt. It would be inconsistent with its character, it would be inconsistent with the faith which it requires from its votaries, if it did not seek that predominance; perhaps by any means, however violent, however contrary to the faith of solemn engagements.

Let then Protestants of every denomination beware of the consequences of the measures now proposed; let them consider well, whether those measures will not probably, if uncontrolled, lead to *their* destruction. Let, too, those who profess the Roman Catholic religion, but yet regard the freedom of the British constitution, consider what may be the consequences to that constitution, of that predominance at which the Ro-

man Catholic Church has ever aimed, at that tyranny which it has ever sought to establish, whenever its power has been without sufficient control.

Let them read, dispassionately, the history of their church; let them consider the evils which its lust for uncontrolled power has produced, and let them ask themselves this question, "Am I not, or may I not be, the slave of that power which I am seeking to establish, without any means of controlling its most extravagant tyranny?"

Should the measures proposed be adopted without qualification, the result cannot be peace, unless the Roman Catholic laity, bearing in mind that they are members of a government founded in freedom, shall throw off the tyrannical power which their church has usurped over them, and seeks to usurp over all; unless they shall determine to be free subjects of a free government, and not slaves of the Church of Rome.

Is there nothing of the spirit of party in the adherence of many who profess the Roman Catholic religion to that religion? Why have not Roman Catholics of the present day, feelings of the rights of a freeman;—such feelings as animated the parliament of Henry the Second, in their convention at Clarendon—such as animated, at different times, the parliaments of Edward the First, Edward the Third, and Richard the Second?

Where is the spirit of independence flown by which those parliaments were animated ?

If any good can proceed from the measures now proposed, it must proceed from *an altered character in the Roman Catholic mind*. In the mass, such a change cannot be hoped for ; but there may be individuals, who, allowing to themselves cool reflection, may perceive that they have forged for themselves the chains they now bear ; that it depends only on themselves to be free ; that if they *will*, they *may* be free : that, without discussing *doctrinal* questions, and looking only to the *discipline* of their church, they may find, that from *that discipline*, and from the exertions of power springing from that *discipline*, has arisen, in a great degree, the slavery of which they feel the weight.

Let them first ask, Why are we to be refused the selection, amongst the ministers of our church, even of our domestic chaplains ?

Let them go a step further. Let them ask themselves this question.

What is the effect of auricular confession on their minds ; what is the character which it stamps upon them ; what is the power which it gives to their confessor, if both are sincere ; what is the effect on the minds of both if neither is sincere ; and let them ask themselves fairly, whether both, or either, have or has always been sincere.

Let them consider the power which may thus be obtained over them, and the consequences of such power; and let them determine for themselves, whether that power is consistent with the just freedom of an ingenuous mind?

Let them coolly consider, the several articles of the Roman Catholic faith, giving power to their priesthood, and whether that power may not be abused; let them read the history of former times, and judge for themselves, whether that power has not been abused, and whether mischiefs have not arisen from such abuse?

Let them consider, whether they cannot form, for themselves, remedies for such abuse; whether they cannot, without separating from that church, check, in some degree, the abuses which have prevailed in it.

Let them contemplate the present condition of Spain. Let them ask, Was there not a strong spirit of freedom in the ancient governments of that country? Let them inquire, What has destroyed that freedom. What has brought the laity of Spain under the abject subjection which that country now suffers. What has caused the re-establishment of the Jesuits in that country. What has again introduced the inquisition. What has been the effect of the swarms of religious orders in that country. What has checked its industry, its manufactures, its commerce.

Let, then, such Roman Catholics as look to the

effect of Catholic emancipation as tending to the quiet and the improvement of Ireland, consider, whether the immediate expulsion of the Jesuits is not necessary to its quiet; whether the immediate expulsion of its religious orders is not important to its general improvement. Let them consider, also, the effect of the numerous holydays in the Roman Catholic Church on the industry of the country. Let them visit the cantons of Switzerland; let them remark the difference between the improved state of the Protestant cantons, and the comparatively wretched condition of adjoining Catholic cantons, which every Protestant peasant ascribes to the uncontrolled influence of the Roman Church, and the numerous holydays of which it requires the observance.

Let those Protestants also who support the ministerial measures, coolly consider what may be the result. The ministers represent what is proposed as a *final settlement*. *Can it be a final settlement?* They open every office of the state, one only excepted, to the Roman Catholics; that one office, an office during pleasure, always in the gift, and removable at the will, of the most powerful party in the administration. The principal minister of the crown, and every other cabinet minister, every officer of state, every judicial officer, and every ministerial officer of the crown, may be Roman Catholics. The Roman Catholic party may be joined by any other party disappointed in the ob-

ject of obtaining power ; and to strengthen their own influence, will the Roman Catholic party forbear to propose ulterior measures ; will they hold themselves *bound* to what is proposed as a *final adjustment* ? When what the people of Scotland deemed a final adjustment in their contract of union with England, is for the purposes of this adjustment to be annulled in an important point by the measures now proposed ; how can it be imagined, that those measures should be deemed a final adjustment, if there should be power to obtain more ? Can there be a more solemn contract, a contract to be observed with greater strictness of good faith, than that contract of union ?

Every party in a state seeks for itself superiority. Would not the Roman Catholics, forming a powerful party in the state, seek for that object, which if attained would give them the most certain superiority ? The church establishment would be most important to give them clear superiority. Will then the Protestant church establishments be safe under the proposed arrangement ? Can those establishments be safe, if the Roman Catholics should obtain important power, and seek to appropriate those establishments to their own church, by means of the power so obtained.

They will have discovered that threat of force, now described by the gentle word *agitation*, had gained for them what is now proposed. May not a little more of *agitation*, a little stronger demon-

stration of *agitation*, obtain for them all they can demand ; gradually, perhaps, but at length completely ? Will not such agitation, (assisted, not restrained, by political power,) obtain whatever may be demanded ?

What prospect is there, then, of that *peace* which ministers hold out as the reward of concession ?

None ; unless those among the Roman Catholics, who feel the abuses of their church, shall free themselves from the trammels by which they are held in bondage, remove those abuses from themselves, and thus form a force, within the Roman Catholic party, contending with those who may think fit to be still the slaves of priestly power. Such men, so far emancipating themselves, might require the assistance of Protestants to support their freedom, and might seek that assistance.

But such a reform in the Roman Church, if it may be the object of hope, can only be the object of distant hope. At this moment it is the duty of all Protestants to unite in support of their freedom. They may call to their assistance those Roman Catholics who may be willing, without leaving their church, to defend themselves against its tyranny ; and by such means only can peace be preserved.

But if the desire of increased power, or the humiliating effects of superstition, shall bind the Roman Catholics, as one body, to seek the exaltation of their church, the destruction of the

established churches, and to *render the Roman Catholic the sole established church*, in the plenitude of power; and if Protestants, dissenting from the established Protestant churches, shall be led to concur in destroying those Protestant churches, in the hope of obtaining the triumph of their own opinions; or shall quietly allow the Roman Catholics to attack, and attempt the overthrow of the established churches, without interfering for their protection; the result must be war, not peace; war, destructive of the happiness of all; the result of which it may be difficult to foresee, but the evils which it must produce must be obvious to every man.

It behoves, therefore, all parties to concur in any measure which may have the effect of giving peace to Ireland, and to remove discontent from Great Britain; but peace cannot be procured by so raising one party, as to enable it utterly to destroy the other. This, whatever may be the effect of the proposed measures in Great Britain, must certainly be their effect in Ireland; unless their effect can be controlled by the power of Great Britain; by the concurrence, in the exercise of that power, of the Roman Catholics and of the Protestants dissenting from the established churches in Great Britain; and by the rise of a disposition in the laity among the Roman Catholics of Ireland, to free themselves from that subjection to their priest-

hood, which some of them now feel to be a burden which they unwillingly bear.

If the lay Roman Catholics in Great Britain and Ireland could emancipate themselves from the tyranny of their priesthood, as the greater part of the Roman Catholics in France have done, there might be a chance for peace. Otherwise internal war must, sooner or later, be the consequence of adopting the measures proposed.

Let all remember, that it must be for the benefit of all that the British Islands should remain one united kingdom; and that to preserve internal peace, and freedom from foreign control, that kingdom must, be in government, a Protestant Kingdom; and that whatever may tend to endanger the Protestant ascendancy in the United Kingdom, must tend to the separation of Ireland from Great Britain, and to weaken both islands, in contests with foreign powers, and in efforts to attain increased prosperity in each country.

THE END.

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